

Meeting notes:

- **Financial Updates and Transparency Initiatives:**

Nicholas provided a comprehensive financial update, discussed outstanding invoices, and outlined new measures for financial transparency, with input and support from Lisa, Teagan, J, and Matt.

- **Current Financial Status:** Nicholas reported that the organization currently has about \$18,000 in the bank, with outstanding invoices due to Grand Rapids for spring and fall kickball and to Lansing for fall kickball. The Grand Rapids dodgeball coordinator is retiring, causing delays in billing.
- **QuickBooks Implementation:** Nicholas announced the recent purchase of a QuickBooks license to link directly to the bank account, allowing for detailed tracking of income and expenses by sport and city. This will facilitate the separation of funds and improve financial reporting.
- **Financial Oversight and Controls:** Lisa and Teagan recommended implementing a two-person sign-off for expenses and regular bank reconciliations to enhance internal controls and reduce liability. Nicholas agreed and suggested adding Lisa to the bank account for redundancy.
- **Public Financial Reporting:** Nicholas proposed posting a financial summary alongside meeting minutes on the website each quarter, including season-specific breakdowns of income and expenses, to increase transparency for participants and the public.
- **Scholarship Fund Management:** Nicholas described the establishment of a scholarship fund to assist participants with financial need, with contributions collected during registration. The group discussed the need for a formal policy and process for allocating these funds, with Ann and Teagan offering to assist with outreach and marketing.

- **Policy Development for Participant Eligibility and Complaints:**

The team, led by Nicholas, Lisa, J, and Teagan, discussed the creation and refinement of policies regarding participant eligibility (especially concerning felony convictions) and formalized the complaint and feedback process.

- **Felony Disclosure and Background Checks:** Nicholas explained the new requirement for participants to disclose felony convictions during annual registration and to sign a code of conduct, with the possibility of background checks. The group debated the scope and cost of background checks, self-reporting, and the types of offenses that would disqualify participation.
- **Review Committee Structure:** The group agreed to form a committee (potentially five members) to review cases where a participant discloses a

felony, ensuring decisions are made collectively and confidentially. Appeals would be handled by the board or a designated group.

- **Complaint Process Design:** Lisa shared a draft complaint process, emphasizing the need for a structured, multi-step approach that includes a mandatory cool-off period, initial contact through a designated person, and a formal form submission. The process aims to filter out non-serious complaints and ensure all formal complaints receive a response.
- **Communication Channels for Complaints and Feedback:** The team decided to create dedicated email addresses (e.g., complaints@gaysports.org) and shared mailboxes for formal complaints, with separate channels for general feedback. They discussed the importance of managing expectations for response times and ensuring all submissions are acknowledged.
- **Reference to External Policies:** Teagan provided research on how other sports organizations handle liability and background checks, and the group considered adapting elements from established policies, such as those from the North Cal Youth Sports Association and USA Football.

- **Holiday Party and Event Planning:**

Nicholas, with contributions from Lisa, Teagan, James, and Matt, coordinated detailed plans for the upcoming holiday party, including logistics, food, activities, and roles for various team members.

- **Venue and Schedule:** The party will be held at the DeWitt Township Community Center, with access to the kitchen, gym, and community room for four hours. The event will feature a potluck dinner, with participants encouraged to bring dishes and recipes for a digital cookbook.
- **Activities and Tournaments:** Planned activities include a Mario Kart e-sports tournament, a possible basketball sharpshooter contest, and a dodgeball tournament between top teams from Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Ann Arbor. The group discussed logistics for gaming equipment and the feasibility of full teams versus all-star teams.
- **Food Coordination:** Lisa, Teagan, and Nicholas coordinated the procurement and preparation of main dishes (turkeys and hams), with volunteers bringing sides and desserts. They discussed labeling for allergens and providing serving equipment, with James supplying chafing dishes and Teagan offering a label printer.
- **Decorations and Photo Booth:** The team agreed to minimal decorations in the gym, with more focus on the dining area. Teagan volunteered to organize a selfie-style photo booth with props, and James offered backdrops. The group discussed inclusive decorations and a hashtag for sharing photos.
- **Alcohol Policy and Donations:** Nicholas clarified that the venue is officially alcohol-free, advising discretion for those who choose to bring beverages.

The event will not include active fundraising, but attendees may contribute voluntarily to offset costs.

- **Organizational Structure, Communication, and Branding:**

The group, including Nicholas, Matt, Lisa, and Teagan, addressed improvements to organizational communication, board member visibility, and branding, including email setup, website updates, and a new logo initiative.

- **Board Member Visibility:** Nicholas requested headshots and bios from board members for the website to increase transparency and provide clear points of contact for complaints and feedback.
- **Email and Communication Infrastructure:** The team discussed setting up branded email addresses for board members and shared mailboxes for city-specific and board-level communication, ensuring accessibility and privacy.
- **Website and IT Projects:** Teagan offered to involve students in IT minor capstone projects for website redesign, social media campaigns, and video content creation. Nicholas and Matt coordinated with a Grand Rapids member for initial website restructuring.
- **Brand Refresh and Logo Selection:** Nicholas shared that new logo designs have been created and will be circulated for ranked-choice voting among the team, with the goal of launching a refreshed brand in the new year.

- **Sports Programming and Calendar Planning:**

Nicholas, Matt, and Lisa reviewed the projected sports league calendar for 2026, discussed scheduling to avoid conflicts, and finalized plans for league operations in Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Ann Arbor.

- **2026 League Calendar Approval:** Nicholas presented the proposed calendar for all cities, detailing league dates and one-off events. The board formally approved the calendar with flexibility for facility availability.
- **Scheduling Considerations:** The team ensured no overlap between major sports (e.g., pickleball and bowling) to accommodate multi-sport participants. Adjustments were made to avoid conflicts across cities.
- **Expansion and Facility Updates:** Discussions included potential expansion to Traverse City, ongoing axe throwing in Jackson, and new recreational facilities in Grand Rapids. Matt provided updates on gym availability and challenges with scheduling.
- **Sponsorship and Registration:** Matt and Nicholas coordinated on updating the sponsorship packet, with plans to distribute it to potential sponsors once the calendar was finalized. Registration timelines for bowling and dodgeball were also discussed.

- **Fundraising, Merchandise, and Community Engagement:**

The team, led by Nicholas and Matt, explored new fundraising strategies, merchandise options, and ways to engage the community, including a potential gala in Grand Rapids and improvements to apparel distribution.

- **Grand Rapids Fundraiser Gala:** J proposed organizing a ticketed fundraiser gala at a new event space in Grand Rapids, with bocce courts and sponsorship opportunities. The team discussed leveraging community connections for discounts and event planning.
- **Merchandise and Apparel:** Nicholas and Matt evaluated options for apparel production, including print-on-demand services for league shirts and a future online store. They discussed the limitations of local printers and the benefits of direct shipping.
- **Community Partnerships:** J suggested partnering with local businesses, such as Transfigure, for shirt printing and fundraising. The group also considered activating these partners as community sponsors.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Financial Transparency Implementation:** Set up QuickBooks accounts for each sport and location, and provide a QuickBooks lesson for relevant board members to ensure financial transparency and liability coverage. (Nicholas)
- **Bank Account Access and Controls:** Add Lisa to the Lake Trust bank account and establish two-person sign-off for expenses to improve internal controls and liability protection. (Nicholas, Lisa)
- **Quarterly Financial Reporting:** Post a financial summary alongside meeting minutes on the website after each quarterly meeting for public transparency. (Nicholas)
- **Scholarship Fund Process:** Work with Ann to develop a process, policy, and website form for scholarship fund applications, including eligibility criteria and marketing strategy. (Nicholas, Ann, Teagan)
- **Felony Policy Committee Formation:** Form a committee of at least three independent members to review felony disclosures and appeals, and research similar nonprofit policies for reference. (Lisa, Teagan, James)
- **Complaint Process Finalization:** Send out the drafted complaint process to the group for review and implementation, and set up a contact method (form or email) on the website for formal complaints and feedback. (Lisa, Nicholas)
- **Board Member Bios and Contact Info:** Collect headshots and one-paragraph bios from board members for the website, and set up branded gay sports email addresses for each member. (Nicholas, Lisa, Teagan, Matt, James)

- **Holiday Party Food Coordination:** Purchase and coordinate storage of turkeys and hams for the holiday party, and organize main dish and side assignments to avoid duplication. (Nicholas, Lisa, Teagan)